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Charles Edward Stuart

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In April 1746, as events at Culloden drifted away from the Jacobites, Lord Elcho called on his leader Charles to charge forward and save the day. When he failed to do so, and instead left the field, Elcho termed him « an Italian coward and a scoundrel » (Scott, p. 213 ; Ewald, 1875, II, p. 27-33), sometimes popularized as « There you go, you cowardly Italian ». Elcho's squadron of Lifeguard cavalry were one of the Jacobite army's few crack units : their wealthy and arrogant commander had already loaned Charles Edward 1500 guineas, a loan that was never repaid : to Charles it was a wager on success, to Elcho a commercial transaction, as Frank McLynn (1988, p. 141) has argued.

In April 1746, as events at Culloden drifted away from the Jacobites, a cornet in the Horse Guards noted that the Prince wanted to charge forward and save the day. Colonel O'Sullivan ordered Colonel O'Shea of Fitzjames's (whose name did not appear in the 1984 Muster Roll) to take Charles to safety (Livingstone, 1984). « They won't take me alive ! » he screamed, minutes before being led off the field, guarded by Glenbucket's men and the soldiers of the Edinburgh Regiment. Still he tried to return to the fray, before a Scottish officer, Major Kennedy, « seized the bridle and led the prince firmly away from the scenes of carnage ». As he later said, « he was forced off the field by the people about him » (McLynn, 1988, p. 257 ; R.A. Stewart 307/173).

The sources for this latter account are O'Sullivan, Elcho, the Stuart Papers and the HMC papers. The source for the former account is not Elcho himself (though he loathed Charles and had little motive to conceal it), but an article by Sir Walter Scott in the *Quarterly Review*. Scott's account was comprehensively rebutted by A.C. Ewald in 1875, who noted that it was not in Elcho's MS Journal and was inconsistent with other accounts (Ewald, p. 1875, II, p. 27-33). It is not the only piece of Scottish historical evidence for which Scott is the uncorroborated source. Yet, despite the comprehensive

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documentation available elsewhere, it remains frequently cited, even if its original source is forgotten. In Michael Hook and Walter Ross's account of *The 'Forty-Five*, it has assumed the status of a « tradition » (Hook and Ross, 1995, p. 110). We need to ask the question why an unsupported allegation of Scott's which shows Charles in a bad light is preferred to the surviving documentary evidence. Is it the same reason, for example, that kept and to some extent keeps figures such as Sir James Steuart, John Law and Andrew Ramsay out of the comforting collective dubbed the Scottish Enlightenment, and which banished Jacobite patriots from early biographies of distinguished Scots?

In August 1746, not Elcho but another east coast peer, Lord Balmerino, officer commanding the 2nd troop in Elcho's Lifeguards, stood on the scaffold in London. Prince Charles, proclaimed the patriot martyr (even his blindfold for the axe was tartan) was a man of « incomparable sweetness… affability… compassion… justice… temperance… patience… courage ». David Morgan, the English barrister who also died for his brief part in the Rising, likewise described his Prince Regent as having a character which « exceeds anything I could have imagined or conceived. An attempt to describe him would seem gross flattery » (Balmerino, 1746, 2, p. 15-16).

All these three men knew the Prince personally, though only Lord Elcho was a long-term member of his Council (Morgan was co-opted by the Prince to give advice at Manchester on English Jacobitism) (McLynn, 1983, p. 99). Elcho, though he almost certainly never said the words long attributed to him, grew to dislike Charles. Charles in his turn violently disliked Lord George Murray, whose reputation was in turn espoused by Chevalier de Johnstone, his aide-de-camp. The Murray faction and its supporters deprecated the qualities of O'Sullivan, and the low estimate of the Prince's Irish advisers became a staple of a history which has long arguably reflected rather than addressing the faultlines in the Jacobite camp (Pittock, 2004; Reid, 1996). Of these the most important is the assessment of the Prince's character: and this brings us back to Elcho's attributed quotation, and the preferential treatment it has received.

If contemporaries were divided in their opinion of the Prince, and became even more so during the long aftermath of Culloden, the typology of Jacobitism also threw up a polyvalent

image in the struggle over Charles'portrayal. An heroic figure to his supporters, anti-Jacobite rhetoric sought to deflate Charles' glittering image by portraying it as insubstantial (one cartoon in the Blaikie collection at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery shows his proposed invasion of 1744 in the form of images of ships floating round him in bubbles, with all the overtones of illusionary projecting thus conveyed), and to undercut his bravery and leadership qualities by showing them as rash and foolhardy. In this sense, Charles'reputation as a myth is as much a site of contention as is his standing as a historical figure. In the 1740s, he was a source of both hope and fear, and the language of hope and fear alike is hyperbole. This too has had its effect on the historiography, as will be demonstrated later in this essay.

Among the chief typologies of the Stuarts was that deriving from Vergil. The Stuart family in exile had long been associated with the story of Aeneas: this typology is used, *inter alia*, by the Earl of Maitland, John Dryden, Oliphant of Gask and the author of *AEneas and his Two Sons*, published in London in 1746 (Pittock, 1995, i and ii). In the same year, a further interpretation appeared: the Prince as *Ascanius; or the Young Adventurer*, a book by Ralph Griffiths which retailed the detail of Charles'sojourn in Britain in 1745-1746, and which was in turn based on *Alexis; or, The young adventurer*, also published in that year, Alexis being the ungrateful youth of Vergil's second *Eclogue*: though Charles is characterized as a patriotic Scottish shepherd in the 1746 version. Ascanius of course was Aeneas'son: the subtitle, *The Young Adventurer*, remains a staple description of the Prince, suggestive to many of reckless rashness (cf. Donald Nicholas, *The Young Adventurer*, 1949; Margaret Forster, *The Rash Adventurer*, 1973). *Ascanius* was also published in Spain and in France: in the latter country, Charles was «L'illustre Aventurier», illustrious, bright and distinguished rather than merely young. The Lille edition of 1747 was reprinted at Paris in 1763 with a spurious Edinburgh imprint; but the other title had greater staying power, still appearing in Glasgow and London printings at the end of the nineteenth century. Other texts extolled the typology of Charles as the young genius of Britain, a native leader, a patriot prince, a view expressed in William King's Oxford speech of 1747, which called for Charles'return in the terms of the Fourth *Eclogue* («Redeat magnus ille genius Britanniae», following Vergil's

« iam redit et virgo, redeunt saturnia regna », with its prophecy of the return of justice and the golden age : itself used by Dryden as the heading for his *Astraea Redux*, celebrating the restoration of Charles II in 1660).

Just as pro-Jacobite material identified Charles'struggles for restoration with those of his great-uncle, so anti-Jacobite material sought to avoid any such identification, through its emphasis on Charles'foreign-ness, sexual license, religious bigotry and alien rootlessness (though some of these would have fitted Charles II better than Charles Edward) : examples include *Amours of Don Carlos* (1750), perhaps a reply to the pro-Jacobite *Don Carlos of Southern Extraction* engraving of 1749 (Monod, 1993, plate 6). Charles'supposed status as a *jure divino* sacred monarch was also mocked : hence perhaps *The Book of the Lamentations of Charles the Son of James* (1746). However he was interpreted, both the 'Forty-five and the Prince's subsequent career were a source of immediate fascination : hence texts such as *An authentick account of the conduct of the Young Chevalier: from his first arrival in Paris, after his defeat at Culloden, to the conclusion of the peace at Aix-la-Chapelle* (1749).

Charles was, of course, routinely termed « the Young Pretender » in government circles in the mid eighteenth-century (Allardyce, 1949, p. 17), a partisan term which has stuck as a supposedly neutral description despite its origins in the description of Charles and before him his father as « the pretended Prince of Wales » (cf. *The Pretended Prince of Wales's Manifesto and Declaration*, 1745). « Prince » Charles was usually in his lifetime a Jacobite appelation ; « Bonnie Prince Charlie » a name first recorded in Scotland on 17 September 1745 ; « Chevalier » a title of courtesy given by Whig contemporaries (such as Jemmy Butler in his Hudibrastick attack of 1744, *The strolling hero; or Rome's Knight-errant*) more polite than the ostensibly detached historians of today, who if they used « Papist » or « Mahometan » as they use « Pretender » in the way the Whigs of the 1740s did, would soon be in trouble. Queen Victoria's imprimatur to sentimental Jacobitism (she even had *tableaux vivants* from the Rising regularly played out in the grounds of Balmoral) and her adoption of Royal Stuart tartan, changed the position, and made the use of « Prince » respectable, as it was in Charles Klose's *Memoirs of Prince Charles Stuart* (1846), John Adams' Oxford prize poem of 1847 and H.A. Bryden in 1899 (McLynn, 1988, p. 148 ; Allardyce, 1949, p. 2, 33). In

Scotland, the courtesy had begun even earlier, in George Charles'*History of the transaction in Scotland in the years 1715-1716 and 1745-1746* (1816-1817), for example, and was reinforced by the publication of contemporary narratives by the historical clubs, such as James Maxwell of Kirkconnell's *Narrative of Charles, Prince of Wales'expedition to Scotland in the year 1745*, published by the Maitland Club in 1841. While « King Charles III » remains a provocative party title, the continuing avoidance of « Prince » for « Pretender » in the historiography is indicative of an inbuilt and surviving set of prejudices which surface both through the treatment of the Jacobite movement at large, and the character of Charles himself. No-one who has read the sharp dispute between Boswell and George III on how to title Charles Edward can have much doubt that the term used to indicate his status has always been deeply politicized (Lustig and Pottle, 1981).

After the demise of serious Jacobitism (leaving aside the *fin-de-siecle* neo-Jacobite cult, and its little magazines such as *The Royalist, The Fiery Cross, The Legitimist Ensign* and *The Jacobite* (« the only Jacobite paper in New Zealand ») (*The Jacobite,* I, 5, 1920, p. 18), the battle over Charles'reputation became primarily a contest between sentiment and prejudice, the degenerate descendants of his mythos. The first usually took the form of a sometimes vacuous nostalgia located in the Prince's personal charm and the glamour and so-called doomed loyalty of his Rising ; the second was born of a continuing political antipathy to all that Jacobitism represented, and located, where it was personalized at all, in the long and gloomy aftermath of unemployment and alcoholism suffered by the Stuart Prince. In the first camp we might find Alan Reid's *Prince Charlie and the'45* (1886), Evan Barron's *Prince Charlie's pilot : a record of loyalty and devotion* (1913), Sir Compton Mackenzie's *Prince Charlie* (1932) and *Prince Charlie and his Ladies* (1934). For Eric Linklater in 1965, « Charles was the candle who lighted the bonfire, but they [the Highlanders] were the timber that filled a dark sky with their splendid ardour » (Linklater, 1965, p. 150), while Hugh Douglas in 1998 sets out to show « why Charles… was so greatly loved by almost every woman he met, yet was never able to return that love even when his ardour burned white hot » (Douglas, 1998, p. ix). This kind of writing, in which the Prince remains a mysterious, elusive figure : almost a personification of *la gloire*, fawned on by his avid partisans, is thus still to be

found. The second camp, those who dislike Charles or do not rate him have been less likely to write a full-length study of him for obvious reasons, although Susan Maclean Kybett's 1988 biography is an exception. Some recent historians, such as Bruce Lenman in his *Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746* (1980) and elsewhere, adopt a polemical assessment of the Prince as a despotic and egotistical military incompetent, «autocratic, immature, totally self-centred» while having some respect for the movement he headed (Lenman, 1980, p. 247, 287, 288; 1995, p. 13).

For the sentimentalists, the Prince and the Stuart cause were still articulations of patriotism, locked into a picturesque but increasingly irrelevant Scottish past. At its most extreme, this could lead to the idealization of figures such as the Sobieski Stuarts, living manifestations of a past that they largely invented, on both personal and national levels; at its most commercial, it debased the Prince's charisma into the reified kitsch attendant on all mass production devoted to converting personal charm into marketable commodity. Genuine Jacobite survivals jostled with fake Victorian drinking-glasses, and the combination of such relics with imitations typical of Victorian encounters with the past was also reinforced by the Exhibition of the Royal House of Stuart in London in 1889; the importance of Jacobite memorabilia also merited a section (under «Historical and Personal Relics») in the Scottish National Memorials Catalogue of 1890, based on the 1888 Glasgow International Exhibition (Duncan, 1890, p. 127-154). Fifteen of the 31 Jacobite items listed here were personally linked to Charles Edward.

Sentimental Jacobitism ultimately upheld the feminized «pretty boy» image of Charles rather than its masculine equivalent, that of the licentious Don Carlos or returning fertile Prince, and some of its imagery shows a Prince almost too young to be a sexual being at all. Popular images of Charles in the shortbread Jacobitism genre are often based on the 1750 portraits of Robert Strange and William Mosman, which curiously themselves (particularly Mosman's) show the Prince at thirty as more youthful in the face than Louis-Gabriel Blanchet's 1738 portrait, being yet further removed from the wily and arrogant gaze of Maurice Quentin de La Tour's 1748 pastel (Nicholson, 2002). In the eyes of his Scottish adherents, Charles was a «marvellous Boy», an image which suited the

rash youth portrayed by his detractors. The feminized depiction of the Jacobite leadership had been carried to considerable lengths by Government propaganda in 1745, which, following the Betty Burke episode (when Charles dressed as a maid to evade capture), depicted the Prince as a fair maid in a bonnet, and Lord Lovat as an old woman smoking a pipe (Pittock, 1999, Figs 12 and 13).

Serious biography began to develop with Alexander Ewald's two-volume *The Life & times of Prince Charles Edward Stuart* (1875), which drew on the State Papers, Stuart Papers and papers of the Italian states. Ewald worked at the Record Office, and was responsible for making « a calendar of the State Papers of the reigns of the first two Georges ». This put him in an excellent position to do what, as he observed, had never been done before :

> To my surprise, I found that nothing worthy to be called a biography of Prince Charles had been written. Works calling themselves « Lives of the Young Pretender » were endless, but the information contained in their pages began and ended with the Rebellion of 'The Forty-Five'. Little beyond what was due to mere conjecture was known of the Prince's early life and declining years… (Ewald, 1875, I, p. v, vi, 4)

Ewald nonetheless paid some tribute to Charles Klose's 1846 study in his own generally positive view of Charles, which divided the man of 1745 from the aftermath of decline in a pattern of assessment repeated many times since. Further works, including Andrew Lang's lively *Prince Charles Edward* (1900), C.S. Terry's *Life of Prince Charles Stuart the Young Pretender* (1903) and W. Drummond Norie's three-volume *Life and Adventures of Prince Charles Edward Stuart* of the same year followed. Charles also had a steady Continental biographical tradition, of which Joseph Pichot's *Histoire de Charles Edouard* (1833), Marchesa Nobili-Vitellelleschi's two-volume *Charles Edward Stuart and the Romance of the Countess d'Albanie* (1903) and L. Dumont Wilden's *The Wandering Prince* (English translation, 1934) were examples.

The emergent Scottish nationalism of the early-mid twentieth century also showed some interest in Charles and Jacobitism, from William Power's *Prince Charlie* (1912) and W.G. Blaikie Murdoch's *The Spirit of Jacobite Loyalty* (1907) through the pages of the *Scots Independent* and Compton

Mackenzie's relentlessly upbeat work to Hugh MacDiarmid's view of Charles as a symbol of the Gaelic Commonwealth restored (MacDiarmid, 1945, p. 1) and F.W. Robertson's *The Scottish Way 1746-1946* (1946).

From the 1930s, books on Charles Edward and Jacobitism hailed down rapidly, perhaps indirectly reflecting gradually rising interest in the real rather than the sentimentalized politics of the Scottish past. Not only were there the two books from Compton Mackenzie mentioned above, but also Clennell Wilkinson's *Bonnie Prince Charlie* (1932) and Carola Oman's *Prince Charles Edward* (1935). Winifred Duke's, *Prince Charles Edward and the'Forty-five* (1938) and *In the Steps of Bonnie Prince Charlie* (1953), were accompanied by Henrietta Tayler's *Bonnie Prince Charlie* (1945), (a biography for children among a torrent of more heavyweight books from the Taylers), Sir Charles Petrie's, *The Jacobite Movement* (1948, 50) and Peter de Polnay's, *Death of a Legend: The True Story of Bonny Prince Charlie* (1952). The Taylers and Petrie were on the whole sympathetic : Petrie's essay «If» being a fantasy of Jacobite victory had Charles marched on from Derby. By 1967, John Gibson began his now standard *Ships of the'45* (subtitled «The Rescue of the Young Pretender», perhaps in tribute to Charles'enduring glamour, and its marketability) with an apologia for the necessity of yet another book on Jacobitism. Specialized monographs such as Gibson's remained the exception, however, as the well-trod path was trodden again and yet again : indeed Duke began her 1938 study by saying that her book «does not profess to contain anything new» (Duke, 1938, p. vii). Eric Linklater's *The Prince in the Heather* (1965), whose romantic close is quoted above, David Daiches' *Charles Edward Stuart* (1973) and Hugh Douglas' *Charles Edward Stuart, the man, the King, the Legend* (1975) likewise added little to an understanding of the Prince or Jacobitism : but the background of their authors indicated a declining interest in either the movement or its leader among professional historians, particularly in the wake of G.H. Jones' *The Main Stream of Jacobitism* (1954), John Owen's *The Rise of the Pelhams* (1957) and Sir John Plumb and Sir Lewis Namier's emphasis on stability and a lack of ideological conflict in eighteenth-century Britain. Consensus squeezed out the Jacobite challenge, and this approach is still to be found in the work of an older generation of historians such as John Cannon (e.g. *The Whig Ascendancy,* 1981) and Bill Speck.

Yet by the 1970s the picture was changing, following an assault on Namierism from a Namierite heartland, the History of Parliament project. In the volume on *The House of Commons 1715-1754* (1970), Eveline Cruickshanks put forward the argument that the Tory party survived the accession of George I and was thereafter principally a Jacobite party. Although few historians have adopted Cruickshanks'maximalist position for Tory Jacobitism, the argument both for the survival of the Tories and for some degree of Tory Jacobitism is won. With the revenance of Jacobite politics in mainstream history, interest was once again bound to be kindled in Charles Edward as a political leader, not just a rash adventurer : and his central position was confirmed by Cruickshanks'*Political*

Untouchables : The Tories and the'45 (1979). The Prince remained, however, a subject of continuingly partisan assessments, as was recognized in A.J. Youngson's clever portrayal of the 'Forty-five and its leader from a dual perspective in *The Prince and the Pretender* (1985). Such was the zest for celebratory anaphora in Jacobite scholarship, that Frank McLynn (*pace* Ewald and more specialized work such as L.L. Bongie's *The Love of a Prince : Bonnie Prince Charlie in France, 1744-1748* (1986)) could still claim in the Preface to his magisterial *Charles Edward Stuart* (1988) that « there has never been a comprehensively scholarly biography » of his subject (ix). This McLynn most definitely undertook, consulting « nearly 100 000 individual documents in the Stuart papers and tens of thousands in other manuscript collections, especially in the Vatican archives » (ix).

The bicentenary year of 1988 also saw the publication of three other biographies, which illustrated why McLynn's was necessary : Fitzroy MacLean's *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, which brought a soldier's eye to the military side of the 'Forty-five, but offered little else that was new ; Rosalind Marshall's identically titled conventional assessment of secondary sources and Susan Maclean Kybett's rather un *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, a prejudiced and error-strewn hatchet job, which brings to mind the question as to why it is necessary to view a long-dead historical character in such narrowly partisan terms. Kybett's view that the Stuart papers were « almost virgin treasure trove » purchased by Queen Victoria « between 1804 and 1816 » was not untypical of the standard of scholarship in a book which cited no scholarly work published in the previous thirty years (Pittock, 1990, p. 107-108). Carolly Erickson's yet again *Bonnie*

Prince Charlie (1989) completed the bicentennial celebrations, indicating that it was no coincidence that the biographies which described their subject by his popular title were those that did least to change popular opinion. After McLynn, normal service has been resumed. Diana Preston's *The Road to Culloden Moor* (1995), Hugh Douglas's *Bonnie Prince Charlie in Love* of the same year, and its reappearance as *The Private Passions of Bonnie Prince Charlie* (1998) and Douglas and Michael Stead's *The Flight of Bonnie Prince Charlie* (2000) all ensure 'Bonnie Prince Charlie's continuation as a brand. Few figures so long dead can be so inseparable from their own kitsch. The sentimental tradition is alive and well, and this continues to leave serious historians free play for prejudiced or lazy reactions to the evidence, which remain common in part no doubt because Charles Edward's biographers often not only bear out the historian's distrust of biography's distorting perspectives, but also more than occasionally provide an assessment more akin to the gushing language used of celebrities by the mass media. Charles Edward's rising receives a page in the *New Penguin History of Scotland*: its leader is described as viewed by nearly all his contemporaries as « an Italian drunk » (Lenman in Houston and Knox, 2001, p. 323). What is the point of this assessment, and what does it contribute to a comprehensive view of the enormous imaginative significance of the 'Forty-five and the mythos of its leader? If there is one thing that the study of *mentalites* can achieve, it is to help historians understand that political defeat is neither predicated on nor the cause of cultural absence. We should avoid Children of the Mist and drunken Italians alike in searching out Charles Edward's reputation, while recognizing that they are two sides of the same coin, prejudice and sentiment, alike as hyperbolic as was their common ancestor, the propaganda war of the 1740s.

Where lies the truth? The documentary evidence on Prince Charles is vast (as the scale of McLynn's researches makes clear), and so is the secondary literature, which is of extremely uneven quality because so much emotion continues to be invested in the reputation of this man, iconic in his own day, and not less so two centuries after his death. It would thus be presumptuous to offer a definitive answer to the question of how high the Prince should stand on the scale of reputation. But a number of observations can be made nonetheless.

The first is that a disproportionate part of any assessment rests on Charles'conduct in Scotland in 1745-1746. In turn, a good part of this rests on our judgement of the relative qualities of Charles and Lord George Murray. Was it the case, as Chevalier de Johnstone argued, that if Charles had only had the good judgement to sleep through the campaign, he would have awoken crowned in London? Few historians who quote this soundbite with approbation go on to note that Johnstone was Murray's ADC, perhaps because Murray's pessimism about ultimate Jacobite success is in hindsight more congenial than Charles' hopes of victory. Few historians either are interested in day-to-day relations within the Jacobite army. From those that are, such as Frank McLynn, a different picture emerges. Although the Duke of Perth had sounded out Lord George on the possibility of joining the Rising, his almost certainly unionist views and by now close relations with the Hanoverian establishment (he had probably kissed George II's hand in 1743) roused the suspicion of many, including Murray of Broughton, and concerns that Lord George was a traitor persisted in parts of the Jacobite camp during the campaign: they were not merely the paranoid delusions of the Prince, though both he and Lord George shared a tendency to high-handedness and acting without consultation. Lord George's superior understanding of drill and tactics was combined with a safety first strategy which it remains difficult to understand in the circumstances of such a bold venture: its continuing popularity is an indication of how far the historiography predicates the inevitability of the Rising's fate. It was Lord George who opposed Charles'declaration abolishing the Union, who contravened his wish to march on London and then his wish to attack Wade, and who opposed the presence of Catholics on the Prince's Council, resigning his commission in a pet when Charles suggested that the Duke of Perth, a Catholic nobleman, should take the surrender of Carlisle. On the march south, it was Lord George who was the most persistent in nagging for retreat. On the other hand, it was Charles who blocked Lord George's support for indispensable espionage, who misrepresented French intentions, and who wrongly predicted that Sir Watkin Williams Wynn and his horse would join between Macclesfield and Derby. Both expected too much of the English Jacobites on the march south. Whether or not the decision to retreat was the right one

(and the mixture of affronted pride and military judgement on both sides remains inextricable), Lord George came into his element in managing retreat, while Charles sulked, drank and idled, self-destructively lingering at Preston and leaving a garrison behind at Carlisle. Back in Scotland, Lord George suggested that Charles «relinquish power» to his military commanders, and, following some psychosomatic illness on the Prince's part. Murray led «a mutiny in all but name» in insisting on retreat from Stirling while exaggerating the number of deserters to support his case. After he called off the night attack before Culloden without Charles' authority, he was never trusted by the Prince again : in April 1747, he wrote to tell his father that Lord George should be imprisoned. Charles was not alone : for a Jacobite commander like John Roy Stewart could also write of «George Murray… The flatterer of merciless guile» (McLynn, 1983, p. 11; Hook and Ross, 1995, p. 88, 92 ; Campbell, 1933, p. 173). The campaign was in some ways a struggle between the personalities of the Prince and his chief commander, and our assessment of Charles is symbiotically tied to our assessment of Murray. Was Lord George a genius or a good but arrogant and pessimistic conventional commander ? Was Charles a visionary strategist or a mendacious adventurer ? Were his Irish officers, O'Sullivan (who had a reasonably distinguished French military career) chief among them, obsequious incompetents or simply the Murray faction (Elcho, Murray, Ogilvy's) hated rivals ? Spin is not a new invention, and the accounts of the Rising we have from its participants contain plenty of it, though not always seen as explicitly as in the spleen with which the Master of Sinclair describes the 'Fifteen.

Charles was undoubtedly prey to oscillation between euphoria and depression, and the retreat from Derby was heavily marked by the latter. His conduct in fighting Culloden on poor ground was self-destructive and exacted a heavy price from his troops : yet it must be said that all the alternative tactical options involved the abandonment of Inverness, the last burgh of any size held by the Jacobites. He was merciful to his enemies, unwilling to condone needless slaughter, and arguably showed a strong instinct for strategy, in his desire to make a rapid advance on London when many of his commanders (including Lord George) overestimated their ability to prosecute war in Scotland, being both overconfident of their

own safety in the case of any reverse and misjudging both the ability of the Royal Navy to blockade and the financial power that the British state could bring to bear if given time to do so (McLynn, 1988, p. 159, 169-171, 250-251, 551).

The second issue of reputation surrounds the Prince's conduct after 1745. As early as 1744, his father noted his predilection for alcohol, and during his flight through the heather two years later he was drinking a bottle of brandy a day, and even engaging in drinking contests. His established liability to mood swings can only have been exacerbated by this. Always irritable when thwarted, by 1750 he displayed signs of uncontrolled rage when his will was crossed ; when women crossed him, they could experience physical as well as verbal violence : as Voltaire put it in 1763, George II secured Canada « at the very time the Stuart Prince was aiming kicks and blows at women » (McLynn, 1988, p. 379, 461). From the 1760s, except when hunting, Charles began to be almost perpetually drunk. His drinking and rages, which alienated his declining band of supporters, finally led to a parting of ways between himself and the last of his senior Scottish staff, Andrew Lumisden, his private secretary, in 1768. The severe stroke which brought Charles'life to a close was no doubt linked to his drinking.

This is all well established. Yet if we stand back and assess the Prince's life, rather than engaging in it as tabloid reportage, we surely need to bear in mind not only Charles' forty-year experience of redundancy and disappointment, but also the general standard of eighteenth-century personal and political conduct. Charles remained courteous while sober, and was both merciful and sentimental. He endured the prolonged anticlimax of his adult life less well than his father had done, because he was less resigned to disappointment, and because he had come closer to the Crown, and knew it. The aftermath of fame and success is habitually bitter to those who lose it early: Charles in this respect was merely of the *vin ordinaire* of humanity. John Buchan's picture of the Prince's marginality and failure in « The Company of the Marjolaine » is arguably the product of better judgement than some of the snipes of *parti pris* Charles had dignity and charm, the latter sometimes irresistible ; he had charisma, strategic vision and the ability to take risks to achieve it ; he was bitter, authoritarian and paranoid, an alcoholic prone to violent rages. He was a Catholic who converted to Anglicanism and angered his Nonjuring

supporters by reputedly attending Lutheran services in Germany; he was an opportunist and a liar, generous, merciful, miserable and possibly racked with an element of guilt: after 1746 he would never again countenance the use of Scotland as a scene for a diversionary Rising (McLynn, 1988, p. 325). He was also ambitious and abusive; and the submission of this essay is that Charles Edward's character is so complex that its assessment requires careful judgement, in preference to being charged with the extremes so characteristic of its subject.

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